

Oct. 19, 2006

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East Riverside/Oltorf Combined Neighborhood Plan

7. Urban Design Guidelines

Introduction

The purpose of the voluntary design guidelines is to reinforce the positive elements, patterns, and characteristics that exist or are desired within the Riverside, Parker Lane and Pleasant Valley Planning Areas; they help each neighborhood planning area to create a unique sense of place within the city. Adherence to the guidelines makes it possible for the existing and desired character of the planning area to be preserved, maintained, complimented and/or enhanced.

The following Neighborhood Design Guidelines for the areas within the East Riverside/Oltorf Neighborhood Plan provide a basis for making consistent decisions about building and streetscape design that affects the character of each area. Adherence to the guidelines is voluntary. They are not intended to limit development within the Riverside, Parker Lane and Pleasant Valley Areas. The intent is to provide ideas for the appearance of new development, redevelopment, or remodeling. These guidelines primarily focus on the streetscape— the publicly viewed area between the fronts of buildings and the street. This area includes the streets and sidewalks (public rights-of-way), front yards, building facades or fronts, porches and driveways (private property).

There were a few themes that consistently emerged throughout the East Riverside/Oltorf Neighborhood Planning process that the voluntary urban design guidelines in this section attempt to address:

First, the character of existing single-family residential neighborhoods should be preserved and new construction should integrate well with existing development. Consideration of existing development should be given with respect to the height and overall size of new structures. Building that encourages "neighborliness" is appreciated as is promoting a natural "green" environment.

A second theme is that existing multifamily structures that intend to redevelop as multifamily should incorporate design qualities that are visually pleasing and function and integrate well within the surrounding neighborhood environment. Since multifamily buildings tend to be very large in size within this planning area, much thought and consideration should go into the characteristics of their redevelopment. This section includes a long list of items to consider that relates

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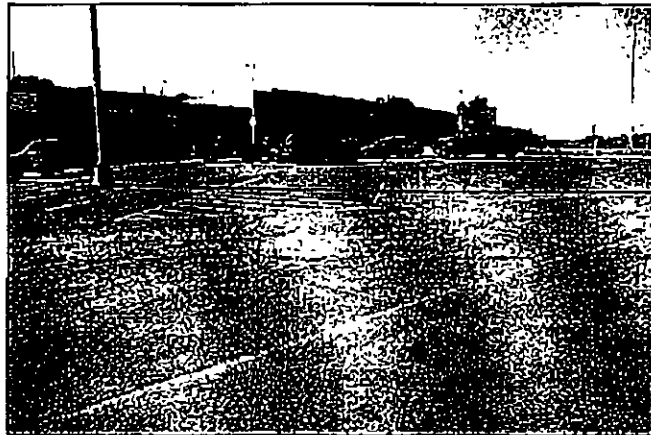
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East Riverside/Oltorf Combined Neighborhood Plan

to the redevelopment of such sites, since these developments will have a significant impact on the quality of life, not only for the large number of people living within the building, but also for the individuals and families in the surrounding community.

A third theme suggests that non-residential corridors, in particular the stretch of Riverside Drive from IH-35 to Pleasant Valley Road, should redevelop in such a way that makes local residents and visitors want to stop and enjoy the area and its services instead of simply passing through en route to another destination. The Urban Land Institute (2003:8) writes:

The era when anything developed in an urban neighborhood was considered to be better than nothing is over. Desperation has driven many communities to accept developments that are inappropriate for an urban street and antithetical to an enjoyable pedestrian experience. Suburban-style, pedestrian-deficient retailing with blank walls facing the sidewalk, parking lots that disrupt retail continuity, throw-away architectural quality, inappropriate building design and scale, and lack of pedestrian amenities are some of the most egregious mistakes that made many urban streets mean and decidedly unfriendly to shoppers.

Unfortunately, the latter part of the preceding quote is an appropriate description of the current state of Riverside Drive. As such, the following principles, which form the basis of the guidelines that apply to non-residential corridors, should apply to redevelopment along Riverside Drive:



- Make development more pedestrian-friendly (i.e. reorient activity on the site to face the street);
- Use site planning and architectural elements to make the redeveloped site fully part of the community;
- Emphasize public space for shared activity;
- Provide thoughtful landscaping options for the visual pleasure and comfort of the street's patrons; and

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East Riverside/Oltorf Combined Neighborhood Plan

- Re-establish a street pattern that connects with the streets of the surrounding community.

The desire of the participants in this planning process is that the non-residential corridors within the East Riverside/Oltorf Neighborhood Planning Areas, specifically Riverside Drive, become destination points in and of themselves. Wider, continuous sidewalks along Riverside Drive, that are set back and buffered from the roadway, should be a part of any redevelopment proposal for Riverside Drive. "Greening" Riverside Drive is necessary to make it more comfortable for pedestrians and generally more aesthetically pleasing. Improvements could include coherent planting of street trees that would provide shade when mature and landscaping of the right of way, including turning islands like the one at Barton Springs and South Lamar.



Special consideration should be given to the condition of Riverside Drive with respect to the creation of incentives to encourage quality retail and/or mixed use development that complies with the general design guidelines identified in this section. Specifying the precise nature of those incentives is beyond the scope of this neighborhood plan, but this plan could be used as a guide and a starting point to establish the nature of an incentives program and its intended results.

New development can be very positive from an economic and social standpoint for both the creator of a project and the surrounding community. Developers and property owners, small and large, are strongly encouraged to read these guidelines and work with the residents who live in surrounding neighborhoods to create a superior project that is mutually supported. The following goals and guidelines reflect the desires of the participants within the East Riverside/Oltorf Planning Areas to promote and experience positive change in the design of their community and make it a source of pride for residents and visitors alike.

Non Residential Guidelines (e.g. Commercial, Office, Mixed Use, Industrial)

- **Urban Design Goal:** Create interesting, lively, inviting, attractive, safe and comfortable non-residential environments that will encourage walking, biking and transit use and be appealing to passing motorists.

Sidewalk Areas

- ❖ Sidewalks should be wide and continuous, with winding or non-linear pedestrian paths preferred.
- ❖ Sidewalks should provide a wide green area (along very busy roadways, twenty feet is recommended) with low landscaping to buffer pedestrians from motorists; shade trees should be situated



This commercial area along Oltorf Street is nicely landscaped, and the parking lot is screened from view. However, there is no buffer between pedestrians and vehicular traffic.

- closer to the interior edge of the sidewalk for pedestrians to enjoy as they shop.
- ❖ Curb cuts along the sidewalk should be minimized so there is less opportunity for the interruption of pedestrian activity.
- ❖ Lighting and signage along the sidewalk and in public areas should be at pedestrian level. Signage should be oriented to the pedestrian and readable from the sidewalk and preferably mounted on buildings or building awnings rather than on separate or detached structures (e.g. pole mounted signage); it should not dominate the landscape.
- ❖ Bus shelters should provide shading and protection from inclement weather, seating, and lighting for visibility and safety.

Buildings

- ❖ Buildings should be pedestrian-oriented with storefronts close to the street, both in the front and on the sides to have direct access from sidewalks, except where there is a desire for outdoor seating areas or markets

East Riverside/Oltorf Combined Neighborhood Plan

- ❖ Ground floor windows should promote visibility to store interiors and buildings should include awnings to provide additional relief from sun and rain.
- ❖ Buildings should be constructed at a human scale; to avoid a "canyoning effect" stepped back building heights are preferable.
- ❖ A diversity of building heights and dividing and/or recessing building facades can be incorporated into the design to avoid a solid wall effect and reduce the overwhelming size of large buildings.

Public Areas

- ❖ Public spaces that promote civic activities such as small music events or market squares are encouraged. These areas could include open plazas, seating areas, shading, landscaping and art.



Aesthetics and art

- ❖ Mechanical equipment, utility boxes, trash disposal units, cluster mail boxes and loading docks should be placed and/or located out of sight from the street and/or screened from public view.
 - ❖ The integration of public art into commercial architecture is encouraged in building design and in public spaces.
 - ❖ Landscaped traffic islands and traffic circles are desired to not only make a more attractive roadway environment, but to also facilitate pedestrian crossings and automobile circulation.
- **Urban Design Goal: Create convenient and accessible parking areas that do not dominate the environment and provide safe interaction between vehicles and pedestrians.**
- ❖ The creative placement of automobile parking should be explored, with the ideal situation of lots and garages being behind, above or below the main building(s).

- ❖ There should be a convenient place to park bicycles close to the main entrance of each building.
- ❖ Shared parking that would connect adjacent businesses is encouraged; this would minimize the number of curb cuts necessary and improve overall traffic circulation and efficiency.
- ❖ Where right-of-way is wide enough, parallel parking on the street is encouraged to help calm traffic and buffer pedestrians from autos.
- ❖ Side lot parking should be screened from public view with a low hedge, wall or fence that still allows for security surveillance.
- ❖ Walkways should provide interior as well as cross-traffic connections and be protected from automobile traffic.
- ❖ Partnerships among businesses are encouraged so that there is a unified approach toward service delivery issues. The creation of a shared commercial delivery strip, or service area that is out of public view and does not interfere with the activity on the street and sidewalk is preferred.

Urban Design Goal: Minimize the visual impact of industrial properties from other districts and public spaces in the neighborhood planning area.

- ❖ Industrial properties are encouraged to set back from street frontages as much as possible. Berms and landscaped buffers should be used to screen intense industrial operations from the street and adjacent non-industrial districts.
- ❖ Landscaped buffers along street frontages should include shaded sidewalks or trails.
- ❖ Where inhabited portions of buildings exist (such as offices and lunch rooms), they are encouraged to face the street and have windows and doors directly accessible to the street.
- ❖ Parking and shipping/receiving areas should be designed to the same standard as commercial districts.

Single Family Residential Guidelines

- **Urban Design Goal: Encourage urban design strategies for single-family neighborhoods that preserve, complement and enhance existing character.**

Design Characteristics

- ❖ New single-family construction should mimic existing architecture. Building heights, construction materials and architectural details should enhance the existing character of the neighborhood.
- ❖ Front doors and a minimum of two ground floor windows should be oriented towards the street to promote “eyes on the street.”
- ❖ Duplex structures should have at least one framed entrance that faces the street and should reflect the scale, height and appearance of homes around them.
- ❖ Mechanical equipment (air conditioners, electric and gas meters, etc) and garbage cans or garbage storage areas are best located to the side or rear of the house, where they cannot be seen from the street. If the location is visible from the street, it should be screened from view.
- ❖ Exterior building and site lighting should be unobtrusive and not illuminate neighboring properties.
- ❖ Utilize the Green Building Checklist whenever possible. Use local materials, maintain efficient heating and cooling systems and consider consulting a green building professional for structural details and site plans. See the COA’s Green Building Program for more information (<http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/greenbuilder>).

Landscaping

- ❖ Provide ample space in side and front yards for trees, landscaping or open space. Existing trees in front yards and along the street should be preserved and protected and additional trees planted to create a continuous canopy of cooling shade over the street and sidewalks. Use native and drought-tolerant plant species to the greatest extent possible to minimize water consumption.
- ❖ If a front yard fence is desired, encourage “friendly” fences or hedges along the front property line that are low enough to see over the top (less than four feet) or made of a see-through material to avoid creating a walled-off appearance.
- ❖ Front yards are usually a green landscaped area with minimal impervious paving. If larger areas of parking are needed, they should be located behind the house

Multifamily Residential Guidelines

- **Urban Design Goal: Promote multifamily structures that relate well to the surrounding environment, utilize a variety of building forms, have a thoughtful parking scheme, provide public open space and include a variety of appropriate landscaping features.**

Building Shape

- ❖ Relate the overall height of the new structure to that of adjacent structures and those of the immediate neighborhood. Avoid new construction that varies greatly in height from other buildings in the area, except where the local plan calls for redeveloping the whole area at much greater height and density. To the extent feasible, relate individual floor-to-floor heights to those of neighboring buildings. In particular, consider how the first floor level relates to the street and whether this is consistent with the first floors in neighboring buildings.
- ❖ Relate the size and bulk of the new structure to the average scale of other buildings in the immediate vicinity.
- ❖ Consider utilizing a variety of building forms and roof shapes rather than box-like forms with large, unvaried roofs. Consider how the building can be efficiently manipulated to create clusters of units, including variations in height, setback and roof shape. Make sure various forms and shapes work together to create a coherent whole.

Porches, overhangs and various dormer styles enliven the facades of these condominiums at the right. (Southside Park Co-housing in Sacramento, CA; www.designadvisor.org)



Building Appearance

- ❖ Avoid creating a building that looks strange or out of place in its neighborhood. Consider a building image that fits in with the image of good quality middle-income housing in the community where the project is located.

*** DRAFT ***

East Riverside/Oltorf Combined Neighborhood Plan

The housing below interprets the image of the traditional neighborhood home in a row house configuration, increasing density while maintaining the look and feel of a single-family development. (Harriet Square, www.designadvisor.org)



- ❖ Consider providing as much visual and architectural complexity as possible to the building's appearance while maintaining a hierarchy of scale and a unified overall form. Consider breaking a large building into smaller units or clusters. Consider variations in height, color, setback, materials, texture, trim, and roof shape. Consider variations in the shape and placement of windows, balconies and other façade elements. Consider using landscape elements to add variety and differentiate units from each other.
- ❖ Maximize window number and size (within budget constraints) to enhance views and make spaces feel larger and lighter. Use standard size windows, but consider varying where and how they are used. Consider ways to screen and physically separate ground floor windows from walkways - through screens or plantings - to provide privacy.
- ❖ Pay careful attention to the design and detailing of front doors. Consider what the front doors convey about the quality of the project and its residents. To the extent possible, respect the placement and detailing of good quality front doors in neighboring homes.
- ❖ Relate the character of the new building façade to the façades of similar, good quality buildings in the surrounding neighborhood or region. Horizontal buildings can be made to relate to more vertical adjacent structures by breaking the façade into smaller components that individually appear more vertical. Avoid strongly horizontal or vertical façade expression unless compatible with the character of the majority of the structures in the immediate area.

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The façade treatment of these townhomes gives a single family appearance and helps them to blend in to the existing neighborhood. Metro Square, Sacramento – Townhomes, www.cnu.org

- ❖ Consider relating the roof forms of the new building to those found in similar, good quality buildings in the neighborhood or region. Avoid introducing roof shapes, pitches, materials or colors not found in the neighborhood or region.
- ❖ Respect the rhythm, size and proportion of openings - particularly on the street facades - of similar, good quality buildings in the neighborhood or surrounding area. Avoid introducing drastically new window patterns and door openings inconsistent with similar, good quality buildings in the neighborhood or surrounding area.



The size and rhythm of the doors, windows and porches for this co-housing development reflect those found in more traditional neighborhoods. (Southside Park Co-housing in Sacramento, CA, www.designadviser.org)

- ❖ Trim and details can provide warmth and character to a building's appearance, particularly on street facades. In general, the complexity, depth and proportion of trim should relate to that used in good quality middle-income housing in surrounding neighborhoods. Carefully consider the design of porch and stair railings, fascia boards, corners, and

areas where vertical and horizontal surfaces meet - for example where a wall meets the roof. Generally put trim around windows. Consider adding simple pieces of trim to the top and bottom of porch columns.

- ❖ Creative use of materials and color can add variety and visual interest to any façade. In general consider materials and colors - for the façade (including foundation walls) and for the roof - that are compatible with those in similar, good quality buildings in the surrounding neighborhood or region. Avoid introducing drastically different colors and materials than those of the surrounding area. Consider using materials and construction details that do not require repeated or expensive maintenance. Favor materials that residents can easily maintain themselves.
- ❖ To the extent possible, provide individual identities and addresses for each dwelling unit. Consider ways to break large, repetitive structures into smaller, individually identifiable clusters. Ensure that all dwelling units have clear, individual addresses. Consider design strategies that allow residents to enhance and individualize the exterior appearance of their own units.



Large complexes can be broken down into smaller clusters. Each cluster, in turn, can be broken down into several separate buildings, which include individual entrances and identities for each unit. (Waterside Green, www.designadvisor.org)

Building Layout

- ❖ Provide as many private, ground level entries to individual units as possible. Ensure that all building entries are prominent and visible and create a sense that the user is transitioning from a public to a semi-private area. Avoid side entries and those that are not visually defined. At all entries consider issues of shelter, security, lighting, durability, and identity. For apartment buildings, allow visual access from manager's office and/or 24 hour desk. Allow visual access to stairs and elevators from the lobby. For buildings with clustered and individual unit entries,

consider providing small "porch" areas that residents can personalize with plants, seasonal decorations, etc. Limit "shared entries" to the smallest number of households possible, eight maximum. Consider providing some form of storage - for strollers, bikes, etc. - at or close to all main entries.

- ❖ Consider ease of visual and physical surveillance by the residents of areas such as the street, the main entrances to the site and the building, children's play areas, public open space and parking areas. Consider locating windows from actively used rooms such as kitchens and living rooms so that they look onto key areas. Also consider containing open spaces within the building layout and using the selection and layout of plant materials to enhance, rather than hinder, surveillance and security. Consider specific design strategies to maximize the security of the building, including adequate lighting, lockable gates and doors at all entrances to the site and the buildings, and video cameras with monitors. See also information on Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED, <http://www.cptedontario.ca/>)
- ❖ The entry to the site is critical to the public image of the development. Emphasize the main entrance and place central and shared facilities there if possible. Respect the street and locate buildings on the site so that they reinforce street frontages.



*Entrances to apartments are evenly spaced along the building, providing numerous points of entry while maintaining a strong and continuous presence along the street.
(Paula Avenue Apartments, www.designadvisor.org)*

- ❖ To the extent possible, maintain the existing setback patterns within the immediate vicinity of the building. Avoid locating a building far in front of or far behind the average setback lines of the four to five properties located on either side of the proposed development. Respect the side yard and rear yard setback lines prevalent in the area.

East Riverside/Oltorf Combined Neighborhood Plan

The buildings in this development are set back slightly relative to neighboring buildings in order to accommodate grade changes and make room for plants along the sidewalk. (Matsusaka Townhomes, www.designadvisor.org)



- ❖ Consider placing buildings on the site so as to maximize solar access during cooler months and to control it during warmer months. Also consider maximizing natural ventilation and access to views from within the site. Avoid a layout in which adjacent buildings obstruct one another. Design the building so that sun directly enters each dwelling unit during some part of the day year round.

Landscaping

- ❖ Good landscaping is critical to the quality of any project. Consider how landscaping and planting will be handled from the very beginning of the design process. Avoid considering landscaping as an "extra" that can be added in at the end of the project or, worse, eliminated in the name of cost control.
- ❖ Provide as rich a variety of plantings - trees, shrubs, groundcover, and grass areas - as possible. Anticipate mature sizes and avoid crowding trees, shrubs and buildings. Use hardy, native species of trees and plants that are well suited to the project location and are easy to water and maintain.

The courtyard and the landscaping for this multifamily development create a small private garden for residents. (www.designadvisor.org)



East Riverside/Oltorf Combined Neighborhood Plan

- ❖ Consider how the landscape will be used by residents and specify appropriate plantings. In general, assume heavy use in all landscaped areas. Avoid delicate plants and shrubs in heavily trafficked areas, especially in locations where they can be trampled by children.
- ❖ Recognize that some paved area will be necessary in family housing to facilitate children's play. However, large, empty paved areas should be avoided. Consider using alternative landscape approaches - plantings, play equipment, outdoor furniture, trees and grass - to break these areas up into smaller functional units.

A variety of different types and sizes of paved areas are provided in this courtyard. Note how the bench is placed on the paving for ease of maintenance, but faces the grass to allow supervision of play.
(Willowbrook Green Apartments,
www.designadviser.org)



- ❖ Outdoor seating should be an integral part of any landscape plan and should be thoughtfully designed and located. Avoid simply scattering seats at random through the site. Consider what the seating looks at and what looks at it. Consider how the seating is oriented with respect to the sun and breezes and whether it needs protection from rain or wind. Avoid "one type fits all" solutions, particularly in larger projects. Consider providing different seating for different users. Also consider providing some moveable seating if appropriate.
- ❖ Pedestrian paths and walkways are critical to the smooth functioning of any affordable housing project, particularly larger, multi-unit developments. Consider the wide range of uses that any path must accommodate - children, adults, bicycles, skate boards, walkers, pets, furniture moving, etc. - and design with this range of uses in mind. Avoid paths that are too narrow to accommodate multiple users at the same time. Consider rounded corners at all intersections and direction changes, especially in projects with children. Ensure that paths are well lighted so that users can see where they are going and be seen by other people.

East Riverside/Oltorf Combined Neighborhood Plan

Consider designing path edges so that they encourage users to stay on the path and not trample on adjacent plantings (e.g. through changes in slope or materials or by providing raised edges). Remember that the shortest route from point A to point B is usually a straight line. Avoid forcing people to follow circuitous routes to their destinations or be prepared for the new, unplanned paths that will inevitably appear to accommodate occupant use patterns.



The wide, meandering path in this apartment courtyard broadens at special areas where seating is provided. (www.designadviser.org)

- ❖ Think of public open spaces - shared outdoor areas intended for use by all residents - as "outdoor rooms," and design them as carefully as any other rooms in the project. Avoid undifferentiated, empty spaces. Consider the types of activities that will occur in the "rooms," including cultural or social activities unique to specific user groups, and design the shared open space to accommodate these activities.

The "outdoor rooms" of this apartment complex are nicely laid out and well furnished. Note how different materials (grass, concrete, plantings) are used to define different parts of the "rooms." (Tuscany Villas/Villa Calabria), (www.designadviser.org)

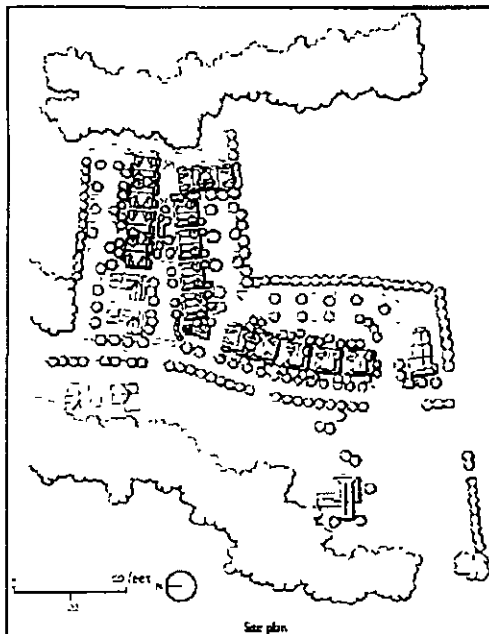


- ❖ Provide clear boundaries between publicly controlled spaces (streets), community controlled spaces (shared open space) and privately controlled spaces (dwellings and private open space). Consider enclosing

or partially enclosing open space with project building(s) to provide clear boundaries.

Parking

- ❖ Avoid letting garages, driveways and parking lots dominate the streetscape. Consider placing them at the rear or side of the site to allow a majority of dwelling units to "front on" the street. Consider planting trees and shrubs to soften the overall impact of parking areas and to provide shade and noise reduction. At buildings with parking garages, avoid large areas of blank wall facing the street. Consider incorporating decorative elements above the garage door to soften its visual impact. Consider improving unavoidable blank walls with decorative artwork, vines, and good quality durable materials to minimize graffiti and deterioration.



The site plan for this 45 unit project has broken the parking (highlighted at left) into two modest sized lots and placed them behind the buildings. Putting the parking in the back allows a continuous line of front doors - uninterrupted by garages or parking lots - to face the street (The Farm, www.designadvisory.org)

- ❖ Provide locations for parking that minimize walking distance between dwelling units and cars and that allow for casual surveillance of cars from a number of different units. Avoid remote parking. Avoid large lots. Consider breaking them into multiple, smaller lots to enhance safety and accessibility and minimize the aesthetic impact of large, unbroken rows of cars. Locate handicapped and elderly parking with immediate access to their respective units. Locate visitor drop off and parking near main entrances and clearly mark all visitor parking spaces. Provide pleasant areas to wait for rides or public transportation.

*** DRAFT ***

East Riverside/Oltorf Combined Neighborhood Plan

- ❖ Design to minimize conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians. Consider separating bicycle and pedestrian paths from vehicular traffic. Consider linking open spaces so that they form an uninterrupted network of vehicle-free areas. Avoid parking layouts that erode a project's open space until only "leftover" areas are available for pedestrian use. Consider traffic calming strategies to slow down cars within the project.

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Appendices

Appendix A

RECOMMENDATIONS NOT SUPPORTED BY RESPONSIBLE CITY OF AUSTIN DEPARTMENTS

After the department review process, the following recommendations were not recommended to be implemented by the responsible department (department comments follow each recommendation)

LAND USE ITEMS

Recommendation:

Make legal notices for variance, zoning and building permit applications available on the City website by neighborhood planning area.

Departmental Comments (WPDR):

Changes to notification requirements should not be made until AMANDA (a unified database that most city departments will use interactively to perform various required activities related to case documentation, notification and review) is deployed. Building permit applications do not require a legal notice, however, submittal information is currently accessible through the current City website.

Recommendation:

Create and maintain an inventory of private and public restrictive covenants (WPDR).

It would require a major staff effort including extensive research of County deed records, and would require additional staff to conduct this research and maintain the inventory. Maintenance of the inventory would be difficult because new documents are recorded daily. The City does not enforce private restrictive covenants, and as such, the staff would have limited use of the inventory.

TRANSPORTATION ITEMS

Recommendation:

Conduct a study to determine if a crossing guard can be placed at Burleson Road and Ware Road.

Departmental Comments (PW):

We will keep this location for future pedestrian counts. The current pedestrian count is 2 children, which does not warrant a crossing guard.

Recommendation:

Amend City Code to state that any new development or redevelopment shall have a landscaped buffer between the sidewalk and the road to provide for safety.

Departmental Comments (PW):

There are too many variables to consider when deciding on a sidewalk location. Utilities, terrain, compliance with Federal and State design standards, and other site specific conditions often decide the sidewalk layout. Requiring a specific buffer width would place further restrictions on the design of sidewalks.

Departmental Comments (WPDR):

This item is not necessary. The standard location for a sidewalk is 2 feet from the property line, which leaves an unpaved buffer area of 2 to 4 feet between the curb and the sidewalk, depending on the type of road and the width of the sidewalk. Sidewalks are allowed adjacent to the curb only in unusual circumstances such as the need to avoid trees. The buffer area is normally planted with grass, but it can be landscaped. However, landscaping requires the owner to enter into a license agreement with the City to place irrigation facilities within the right-of-way. Landscaping should not be required but is already allowed at the owner's option.

Recommendation:

Conduct a traffic study at Summit Drive and Woodland Avenue and make improvements to the intersection so that turning off of Summit onto Woodland Avenue is less dangerous because of poor visibility due to slope (PW).

Departmental Comments (PW):

There have been no reported collisions at this intersection since October 2001. Visibility between westbound traffic on Woodland Avenue and southbound traffic on Summit Drive at Woodland Avenue is at least 320 feet; 200 feet is adequate for stopping sight distance.

Alternative action: An "intersection ahead" symbol warning sign will be installed on Woodland Avenue in advance of Summit Drive.

Recommendation:

Conduct a traffic calming study along Burleson Road between Oltorf Street and Ben White Blvd. and apply an appropriate traffic mitigation strategy to reduce speeding vehicles (the form of traffic calming used in the Shoal Creek Project is preferred by neighborhood stakeholders) (PW).

Departmental Comments (PW):

Burleson Road is classified as an arterial roadway contained in the AMATP Plan. The traffic calming program was established to reduce speeding on local residential streets with low traffic levels on which the impediment to mobility caused by traffic calming devices would not be an issue.

Recommendation:

Investigate the feasibility of closing Burleson Road at Ben White Blvd. to increase safety and reduce disruptions to the single-family neighborhoods along Burleson Road (PW).

Departmental Comments (PW):

Burleson Road is classified as an arterial roadway contained in the AMATP Plan. We cannot terminate its connection to a freeway. If in future the roadway is removed from the AMATP, this issue can be reconsidered.

Recommendation:

Install appropriate signage going eastbound on Woodland Avenue to warn drivers of the upcoming 4-way stop at Parker Lane and Woodland Avenue (PW).

Departmental Comments (PW):

Currently, in addition to stop signs on all approaches, there is an advance warning of the stop ahead for eastbound drivers at Sylvan Drive and overhead flashing red lights are visible to eastbound traffic at least 540 feet in advance of the stop signs. There has been only one reported collision at this intersection since October 2001, in which a southbound vehicle struck a westbound vehicle.

Recommendation:

Install a landscaped parkway belt between the east and west bound lanes of Riverside Drive to minimize the visual impact of the roadway (PW).

Departmental Comments (PW):

It appears that the neighborhood envisions a wide division between opposing lanes for aesthetic reasons. It would be necessary to purchase right-of-way to accomplish this. This would negatively impact adjacent businesses, and since we must demonstrate a public purpose to acquire right-of-way under threat of condemnation, we might not be able to demonstrate this for a purely aesthetic project. Existing lanes would require reconstruction. Depending on exactly what the neighborhood envisions, the cost would likely be tens to millions of dollars, which would be very hard to justify. Since this is an aesthetic, rather than a capacity or maintenance project, perhaps it should be considered by the Parks and Recreation Department, which would have to assume responsibility for maintenance of any landscaping that it added.

Recommendation:

Restrict truck traffic from accessing Lakeshore Blvd. between Riverside Drive and Pleasant Valley Road (PW).

Departmental Comments (PW):

Lakeshore Blvd. is classified as an arterial roadway. Roadways classified as arterial are intended to serve as the major transportation network to provide for large volumes of traffic, including trucks. Truck prohibitions are installed only on non-arterial roadways if a specific problem with truck traffic can be identified and observed. If the neighborhood can provide details regarding what the perceived problem is and when it can be observed, we will investigate and might find another solution.

Recommendation:

Provide a safe trail crossing across Wickshire Lane from Linder Elementary School to Mabel Davis Park (PW).

Departmental Comments (PW):

Mabel Davis Park is surrounded by a tall chain link fence with "Authorized Personnel Only" signs and has no trail or sidewalk opposite the school. There is currently a marked crosswalk across Wickshire Lane at Metcalfe Road that is the safest and most convenient location at which pedestrians can cross from the school to the park.

Recommendation:

Reinstall "No Truck" signs along Burleson Road between Oltorf Street and Ben White Blvd. (which were removed during I-35/Ben White construction) (PW).

Departmental Comments (PW):

Burleson Road is classified as an arterial roadway. Roadways classified as arterial are intended to serve as the major transportation network to provide for large volumes of traffic, including trucks. Truck prohibitions are installed only on non-arterial roadways if a specific problem with truck traffic can be identified and observed. If the neighborhood can provide details regarding what the perceived problem is and when it can be observed, we will investigate and might find another solution.

Recommendation:

Improve the striping of the existing bike lane along Burleson Road between Oltorf Street and Ben White Blvd. and/or investigate installing curbs or other forms of permanent separation between the bike lane and the automobile travel lane to improve safety (PW).

Departmental Comments (PW):

The bike lane on Burleson Road between Oltorf Street and Ben White Blvd. has very few impediments. There is no parking 24/7 and the sight lines are long and unobstructed. The only maintenance that will be required in future years is the re-striping. A cost for this regularly scheduled maintenance need not be considered here.

Barriers between bike lanes and traffic lanes are used when contra-flow conditions exist (e.g. southbound bike facing northbound cars). This is not a condition on Burleson Road.

PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT ITEMS

Recommendation:

Provide the following public amenities at Mabel Davis Park:
Amphitheater and stage and a fishing dock.

Departmental Comments (PARD):

This item (stage and amphitheater) requires funding through a Capital Improvement Project bond; it is not recommended due to restrictions on use of

remediation cap. This item (fishing dock) requires funding through a Capital Improvement Project bond; the Department recommends that this item not be implemented in an effort to maintain local, informal fishing.

Recommendation:

Encourage PARD to purchase the undeveloped lot at 1701 Windoak Drive for future neighborhood open space.

Departmental Comments (PARD):

PARD understands that the lot is not for sale separate from the rest of the property. The asking price in March '05 was reported to PARD to be \$675,000 for approx. 3.5 acres & 5000 square feet of house. The property is best suited for continued residential use.

Recommendation:

Revise the Scenic Roadway Ordinance so that issues such as landscaping, roadway size and design, etc. are addressed.

Departmental Comments (NPZD):

- The Scenic Roadway Ordinance currently only regulates signage. Council recently approved a commercial design policy document, now being converted to ordinance language that recommends removing the Scenic Roadway designation, and instead tying sign regulations to the five design roadway types (Transit, Urban, Local, Hill Country and Highway)
- Landscaping should be regulated through the landscaping ordinance applicable to the Riverside Roadway type, which is at this time considered a Transit Roadway.
- The Council-approved Austin Area Metropolitan Plan (AMATP) regulates roadway size and design for Riverside.

Recommendation:

Add a gateway sign at some point along Riverside Drive to welcome visitors to Austin.

Departmental Comments (NPZD):

Urban Design staff may be available to assist in developing the site and design criteria for a gateway element such as a sign. Funding source for design, construction and maintenance would need to be identified.

Recommendation:

Request that the city acquire the single-family lots in the floodplain at approximately 2407-2408 Princeton Drive and 2413 Douglas Street (there are approximately 20 undeveloped lots) so that the area is protected from development and maintained as open space.

Departmental Comments (WPDR):

Currently the voluntary floodplain home buy-out program is funded for structures which are subject to high hazard of creek flooding. Due to the limitation of funding, the program is offered on a priority order based on the severity of flooding. There are several hundreds of houses that are on the list targeted for future home buyout. As there are no houses on the subject lots, there is no justification of funding for WPDR to purchase these lots. Please contact PARD to see if there is interest to purchase these lots for a park or greenbelt (there is currently a recommendation in the plan to work with property owners and PARD to see about acquiring these properties in order to create a trail system along Country Club Creek).

Recommendation:

Encourage PARD to purchase the property at 1605 Old Riverside Drive as a neighborhood open space/pocket park (Neighborhood; PARD).

Departmental Comments (PARD)

The lot belongs to the adjacent lot with a house, which appears to be for sale as one piece. The lot is sloping, too small and too intimately related to the adjacent house for public use. The lot is best used for residential purposes.

Recommendation:

Request formal approval from PARD to allow for the construction of Country Club Creek Trail.

Departmental Comments (PARD)

The request is premature and out of sequence; refer to Recommendation 103 in the plan regarding the construction of the CCC trail. PARD questions whether the Alliance could actually apply for and receive public grant funds.

Recommendation:

Establish and maintain green islands in public rights-of-way for the beautification of corridors.

Departmental Comments (PW)

We have raised medians, which are typically vegetated, specified on new divided arterials. We support raised medians only where they are specified in the roadway plan because of the added vehicular capacity that we might obtain with left turn bays that would be included with the median. We would not reconstruct a roadway simply to add a median, unless it were called for in the roadway plan and the left turn lanes we could provide with the median greatly enhanced capacity on a congested roadway. We have no recommendation in relation to providing green islands for beautification. We oppose use of limited roadway funding to add medians purely for beautification, but would be neutral on medians funded from other sources, provided all applicable roadway design standards are met.

Appendix B

INITIAL SURVEY RESULTS

Total survey replies: 250

16,448 surveys sent out (18,276 – 10% for returns and duplicates)

Survey response rate ~ 2%

Of the surveys returned that responded to each question...

In which neighborhood planning area do you live, own property, work, or operate a business?

Parker Lane	101	41%
Pleasant Valley	50	20%
Riverside	97	39%

What things do you like most about your neighborhood? (Top 10 responses)

1. Central Location	6. Single family homes
2. Easy access to downtown	7. Quiet
3. Affordability	8. Natural areas, green space
4. Character	9. Views
5. Trees	10. Low traffic

What are the most important issues in the neighborhood? (Top 10 responses)

1. Managing new development	6. Preserving the natural environment
2. Crime – Safety/Security	7. Quality of the neighborhood, cleanliness
3. Maintaining single family dwellings	8. Revitalization of Riverside, improving current and bring in new businesses.
4. Maintenance and improvements of infrastructure –roads, need more sidewalks.	9. Traffic
5. Need park improvements	10. Code Enforcement

Are there adequate shops and stores to serve your neighborhood? (Paper Survey Only)

Yes: 83%

No: 17%

Are there adequate professional offices to serve your neighborhood? (Paper Survey Only)

Yes: 69%

No: 31%

East Riverside/Oltorf Combined Neighborhood Plan

New local/neighborhood stores would be acceptable in the following parts of the neighborhood?

Location	Count
Along major roads	102
Along major roads, Along some local streets	26
Along major roads, Anywhere, Along some local streets	2
Along some local streets	21
Anywhere	14
Anywhere, Along some local streets	1

Mixed-use development would be acceptable in the following parts of the neighborhood?

Location	Count
Along major roads	71
Along major roads, Along some local streets	23
Along major roads, Anywhere, Along some local streets	1
Along some local streets	25
Along some local streets, Nowhere	1
Anywhere	28
Nowhere	69

New apartments, townhouses, and/or condominiums would be acceptable in the following parts of the neighborhood?

Location	Count
Along major roads	34
Along major roads, Along some local streets	14
Along major roads, Anywhere, Along some local streets	1
Along major roads, Nowhere	1
Along some local streets	24
Along some local streets, Nowhere	1
Anywhere	36
Anywhere, Along some local streets	1
Nowhere	105

New employment centers (e.g. office complexes, industrial parks) would be acceptable in the following parts of the neighborhood?

Location	Count
Along major roads	63
Along major roads, Along some local streets	13
Along major roads, Anywhere, Along some local streets	1
Along some local streets	18
Anywhere	11
Nowhere	114

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Acceptable locations for businesses in the neighborhood?

Location	Count
Along major roads	113
Along major roads, Along some local streets	21
Along major roads, Anywhere	1
Along major roads, Anywhere, Along some local streets	2
Along major roads, Nowhere	1
Along some local streets	12
Anywhere	13
Anywhere, Along some local streets	1
Nowhere	60

Do you support lowering the lot size required for single-family homeowners to build one small apartment (e.g. garage apartment) that is not attached to the main house?

	Parker Lane		Pleasant Valley		Riverside	
Agree	27	28%	16	34%	31	34%
Disagree	51	53%	23	49%	38	42%
Neutral	19	20%	8	17%	21	23%

Do you support lowering the lot size for new single-family homes in your neighborhood?

	Parker Lane		Pleasant Valley		Riverside	
Agree	29	30%	17	36%	26	30%
Disagree	51	53%	22	47%	40	47%
Neutral	16	17%	8	17%	20	23%

Could you support the corner store infill option in your neighborhood?

	Parker Lane		Pleasant Valley		Riverside	
Agree	34	51%	25	56%	36	57%
Disagree	20	30%	11	24%	19	30%
Neutral	13	19%	9	20%	8	13%

Are there any important historic buildings or places that deserve special recognition and preservation?

Mabel Davis Park	Country Club Creek Greenbelt
Mansion across the street from Parker Lane United Methodist Church	Riverside Golf Course
1603 & 1605 Taylor Gaines Street	Old East Riverside Dr.
Town Lake hike & bike trail	Longhorn Dam

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East Riverside/Oltorf Combined Neighborhood Plan

Which streets in the neighborhood need sidewalks the most? (Top 8 responses)

1. Oltorf	5. Sunridge
2. Parker Lane	6. Riverside Dr.
3. Pleasant Valley	7. Summit
3. Woodland	7. Wickersham

Does your neighborhood lack any of the following?

	Parker Lane	Pleasant Valley	Riverside
Bike Lanes	30	26	20
Convenient bus routes	5	3	5
Trails	29	17	15
Sidewalks	21	13	23
Through streets	5	1	5

Are any of the following in need of major repair or reconfiguration?

	Parker Lane	Pleasant Valley	Riverside
Bike Lanes	7	3	6
Sidewalks	14	4	10
Bus routes	3	0	3
Street Network	19	12	15
Trails	8	1	4

What Austin Park do you frequent the most?

Town Lake	50
Zilker	27
Big/Little Stacy	21
Mabel Davis Park	19
Colorado River Park	12
Barton Springs/Creek	3
Riverside Dog Park	2
Moya	1
Travis Heights	1
Pease Park	1
Emma Long	1
Patterson	1
Lake Travis	1
Auditorium Shores	1

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If a nearby park, greenbelt, or recreational area was to be developed or improved, what would your priorities be?

1. Safety – patrols, well lit	4. Accessibility, interconnectivity.
2. Hike/ bike trails	5. Balance between developed and natural park space.
3. Park Clean up, cleanliness	

Are there parts of the neighborhood that experience flooding during heavy rains?

	Parker Lane	Pleasant Valley	Riverside
No	73%	76%	68%
Yes	27%	24%	32%

Do you wish to prohibit front yard parking in your neighborhood?

	Parker Lane	Pleasant Valley	Riverside
No	26%	43%	34%
Yes	74%	57%	66%

How long have you lived in the neighborhood?

	Parker Lane		Pleasant Valley		Riverside	
Less than 1 year	11	12%	6	14%	5	8%
1-4 years	29	31%	21	49%	31	51%
5-9 years	24	26%	8	19%	10	16%
10-14 years	9	10%	0	0%	4	7%
15-20 years	10	11%	6	14%	6	10%
21 or more years	10	11%	2	5%	5	8%

What type of housing do you live in?

	Parker Lane		Pleasant Valley		Riverside	
Apartment	16	17%	23	53%	29	48%
Duplex/ Four-plex	5	5%	1	2%	0	0%
House	60	64%	13	30%	22	36%
Townhouse/Condo	12	13%	5	12%	10	16%
Other	1	1%	1	2%	0	0%

Are you a homeowner or renter?

	Parker Lane	Pleasant Valley	Riverside
Own	74	21	29
Rent	0	0	0

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East Riverside/Olton Combined Neighborhood Plan

What is your ethnic background?

Ethnicity	Parker Lane	Pleasant Valley	Riverside
African-American	2	2	1
Anglo	58	35	36
Anglo, Asian	0	0	1
Anglo, Hispanic	3	1	2
Asian	4	1	2
Hispanic	15	1	8
Multi-racial	1	1	3
Other	5	2	4